

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2814

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CINCPAC REP GUAM/TTPI

CAMEMBASSY TEHRAN 489

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 11948

E.O. GDS

TAGS: EINV, JA, TQ, ENRG, IR

SUBJECT: PALAU SUPERFORT

REF: TOKYO 10148 (NOTAL)

1. AS INDICATED IN REFTEL, PALAU SUPERFORT PROJECT HAS A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE RECEIVING GOJ BLESSING OR SIGNIFICANT FUNDS ARE COMMITTED. EMBASSY TOKYO WOULD LIKE, HOWEVER, TO MAKE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PALAU PROPOSAL AND U.S. INTERESTS IN JAPAN FOR CONSIDERATION BY WASHINGTON AGENCIES.

2. IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, PALAU SUPERFORT PROJECT WOULD SERVE U.S. INTERESTS IN JAPAN IN NUMBER OF WAYS: A) PROVIDED IT QUALIFIED UNDER IEA DEFINITION, OIL STORED IN PALAU CTS WOULD MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO JAPAN'S ABILITY TO MEET 90 DAY RESERVS REQUIREMENT: B) EXPENDITURE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED MILLIN DLLARS IN U.S. ADMINISTERED TERRITORY
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WOLD CONTRIBUTE INDIRECTLY TO FAVORABLE U.S. BOP WITH JAPAN; C) AS A PARTNER IN BUILDING ANDOPERATING THE CTS, IRAN WOULD HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN ITS CUCCCESS, THEREBY ENCHANCING THE SECURITY OF OIL FLOWING

TO OUR MOST IMPORTANT ASIAN ALLY; D) THE CTS WOULD STRENGTHEN JAPANESE PERCEPTIONS OF THE MUTUALITY IN OUR REGIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS; E) UNDER APPROPRIATE AGREEMENT WITH GOJ, SUPERFORT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THESE MUTUAL DEFENSE OBJECTIVES BY PROVIDING U.S. NAVY WITH REFUELING AND BUNKERING FACILITIES.

3. ON NEGATIVE SIDE, CONSTRUCTION OF SUPERFORT COULD POSSIBLY TRIGGER FEARS IN TTPI AND ELSEWHERE OF EXCESSIVE JAPANESE INFLUENCE OVER TERRITORY'S ECONOMY, PERHAPS INGENDERING FRICTION BETWEEN U.S. AND JAPAN, AT LEAST ON PUBLIC RELATIONS LEVEL. ANOTHER CONCERN IS EXTENT TO WHICH U.S. BE OBLIGATED TO PROVIDE SECURITY FOR A FACILITY THE BENEFITS OF WHICH WOULD ACCRUE PRIMARILY TO JAPAN.

4. NEITHER OF THESE POSSIBLE NEGATIVE ASPECTS, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO US TO PRESENT INSURMOUNTABLE DIFFICULTIES. EMPLOYMENT AND TAX BENEFITS TO TTPI AND USG SHOULD BE EASILY DEMONSTRABLE AND IT WOULD SEEM TO US THAT IN RETURN FOR SECURITY PROVIDED BY THE U.S., JAPANESE MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO U.S. IN FULFILLING ITS LARGER DEFENSE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE REGION. ALL OF ABOVE, OF COURSE, ASSUME THAT SUPERFORT WILL NOT PRECIPITATE A DECISION BY PALAU TO DISASSOCIATE ITSELF POLITICALLY FROM THE U.S.

HODGSON

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